HORROR
THE VAULT OF HORROR
10¢
FEATURING
THE VAULT-KEEPER
THE CRYPT-KEEPER
THE OLD WITCH
OH, RALPH... RALPH! I MISS YOU SO! WHY DID YOU HAVE TO DIE? IF ONLY YOU COULD COME BACK TO ME!

THE VAULT OF HORROR!

POSING AS A WEALTHY NEW YORK PUBLISHER, HE TRAVELED TO GEORGIA...AND THERE, BECAUSE HIS FUNDS WERE LOW, HE MARRIED A YOUNG GIRL FROM ONE OF THE SOUTH'S RICHEST CLANS.
AH! I'M SET FOR LIFE! BEAUTIFUL AND RICH! I SURE CAN PICK 'EM!
HEH! ABNER DIDN'T PAT HIMSELF ON THE BACK FOR LONG. HIS WIFE WAS BEAUTIFUL...BUT NEITHER SHE NOR HER FAMILY HAD A DIME!
BROKE?! BROKE?! WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU'RE BROKE?
BUT, DARLING, WITH ALL YOUR MONEY, I DIDN'T THINK...
MY MONEY?! I DON'T HAVE ANY MONEY! I THOUGHT YOU HAD MONEY!
WHAT DOES IT MATTER, IF WE LOVE ONE ANOTHER?
STUPID! STUPID! STUPID! I DON'T LOVE YOU! I ONLY MARRIED YOU BECAUSE I THOUGHT YOU WERE RICH!
ABNER!
YOU TRICKED ME! TRICKED ME! OH, WHAT A SAP I AM!
ABNER, PLEASE DON'T TALK LIKE THAT!
OUR PLANTATION HAS BEEN LOSING MONEY FOR YEARS! BUT MY FAMILY IS A PART OF THE SOUTH'S HERITAGE! WE'RE A PROUD FAMILY! AND WE WERE BROUGHT UP TO BE PROUD OF OUR BIRTHRIGHT, AND TO DEFEND IT! THAT'S WHY WE PRETEND TO BE WEALTHY WHEN WE ARE REALLY...
BAH! YOU TRICKED ME!
OH, FATHER... AUNT MARTHA... HE DOESN'T LOVE ME! HE ONLY..
THERE, THERE, CLAUDIA, CHILD DON'T FRET!
AH NEVAH YET MET A YANKEE WHO WAHN'T A CAD!
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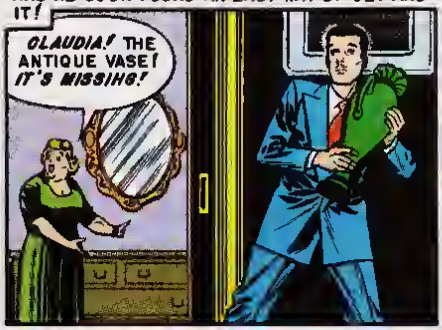
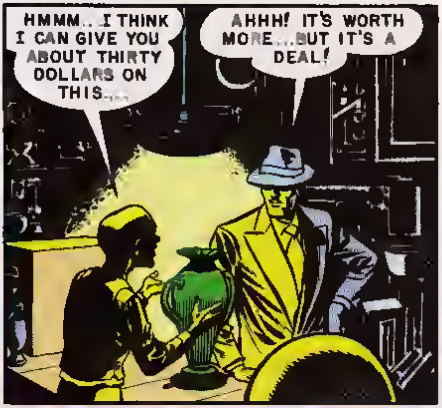
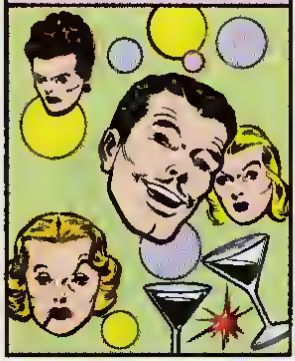
HEH, HEH! THAT WAS A SAD DAY FOR ABNER, BUT THINGS SOON QUIETED OOWN. CLAUDIA'S FATHER ANO AUNT NEVER SO MUCH AS BREATHED ANOTHER SOUTHERN-FRIEO WORD ABOUT THE INGIOENT. INSTEAD, THEIR LIVES SEEMED TO BE CONCERNED MOSTLY WITH THE GRANO AND GLORIOUS PAST OF THEIR ANCESTORS...
HE WAS SUCH A GREAT MAN, WASN'T HE, MARTHA?
(SIGH) YES...
EH? WHO?
WHY... SEBASTIAN CORNELIUS JACKSON! CLAUDIA'S GREAT-GRANDFATHER! HE WAS ONE OF THE GREATEST HEROES OF THE CIVIL WAR!
OH..YOU MEAN OLD POKER FACE?
OLD POKER FACE!? WHY, SUH, YOUAH EYES ARE GAZIN' UPON ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS MEN IN AMERICAN HISTORY! A MOAH UPRIGHT AND COURAGEOUS MAN NEVAH LIVED! WHY, HE BUILT THIS VERY PLANTATION WE LIVE ON!
OH...OKAY...
IT WAS HE WHO SAVED THIS FINE HOUSE FROM THE RAVAGES OF THE UNION ARMY, AND WE ARE ETERNALLY GRATEFUL FOR THE BENEFITS WE DERIVED FROM HIS VISION... HIS STRENGTH AND WISDOM! HE HAS BEEN A MODEL TO US... ALWAYS READY TO DEFEND THE HONOR AND RESPECTABILITY OF OUR NAME!
OKAY, OKAY!
A GENTLEMAN, SUH! AND ONE OF THE MOST BRILLIANT GENERALS IN THE WAR! HE BEGAN A FINE TRADITION ANO HE UPHELD THE DIGNITY AND HONOR OF THAT TRADITION TILL THE DAY HE DIED! MAY HE NENT IN PEACE!
OKAY! OKAY! I SAID OKAY!
YES! AND NOW WE WHO ARE LEFT MUST MAINTAIN THE HONOR AND NOBILITY OF THAT GRAND TRADITION, AND MUST NEVER BESMIRCH THE JACKSON NAME, EVEN IF IT MEANS DEATH!
OKAY! OKAY! OKAY!

ABNER WAS VERY UNSATISFIED WITH HIS LOT. HE HADN'T MARRIED TO HELP DEFEND THE JACKSON HONOR...HE HAD WED FOR *MONEY!* AND HE SOON FOUND AN EASY WAY OF GETTING IT!



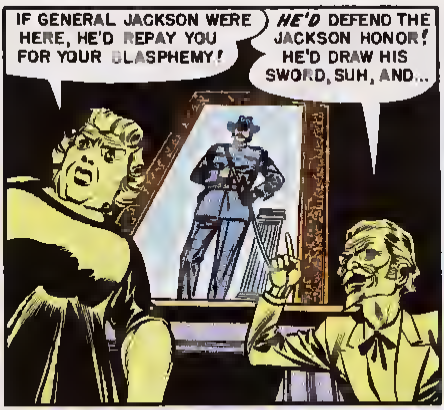


AND THEN IT WAS THE GAY LIFE FOR ABNER SCANLON...



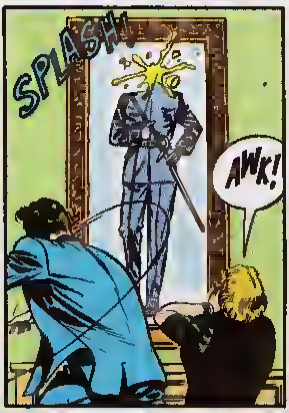
NIGHTCLUBS, BARS, RESTAURANTS. WINE, WOMEN, SONG...AND HE LOVED EVERY PRECIOUS MINUTE!

BUT SOON HIS MONEY WAS GONE, AND IT WAS BACK TO THE PLANTATION, AND...

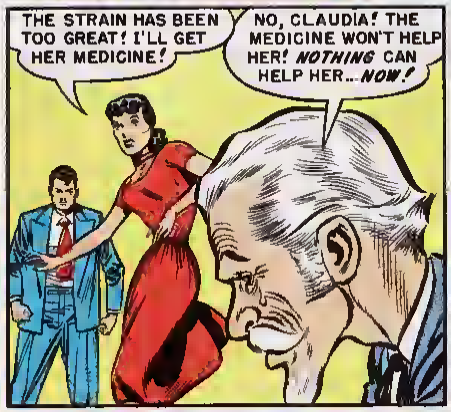

IF GENERAL JACKSON WERE HERE, HE'D REPAY YOU FOR YOUR BLASPHEMY!
HE'D DEFEND THE JACKSON HONOR! HE'D DRAW HIS SWORD, SUH, AND...

SHUT UP! I'M SICK OF LISTENING TO YOU RANT ABOUT THE DEAD-PAN JERK IN THAT PAINTING!
ABNER! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SAYING!

OH, YES I DO! HIM WITH HIS TWIRLY MUSTACHE AND FANCY SWORD! HA! I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT I THINK OF HIM!


SPLASH!
AWK!

OOHHHH! IT'S TOO MUCH! MY... MY HEART!
AUNT MARTHA!


THE STRAIN HAS BEEN TOO GREAT! I'LL GET HER MEDICINE!
NO, CLAUDIA! THE MEDICINE WON'T HELP HER! NOTHING CAN HELP HER... NOW!

SHE'S DEAD!

HEH, HEH, HEH! WELL, AUNT MARTHA'S FUNERAL WAS A QUIET AFFAIR. CLAUDIA AND HER FATHER SAID NOTHING ABOUT WHAT HAD CAUSED AUNT MARTHA'S DEATH TO SAFEGUARD THE JACKSON REPUTATION! THEN SOME DAYS LATER...

?

ABNUH! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

NOTHING, NOTHING! MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS!

JUMPIN' JEHOSOPHAT! THAT'S THE FRAME FROM *GRANDFATHER'S* PICTURE! THE PAINTING OF HIM IS *GONE* FROM THE WALL!

SO WHAT?! *SO WHAT?!* I SHOVED THE PAINTING UP IN THE ATTIC, AND I'M GOING TO SELL THIS FRAME! *SO WHAT?!*

THIS TIME, SUH, YOU HAVE GONE *TOO* FAR! IF GRANDFATHER WERE HERE, *HE'D* DEFEND HIS HONOR... AND I, IN HIS STEAD, MUST DO LIKEWISE! SUH! I *CHALLENGE YOU TO A DUEL!*

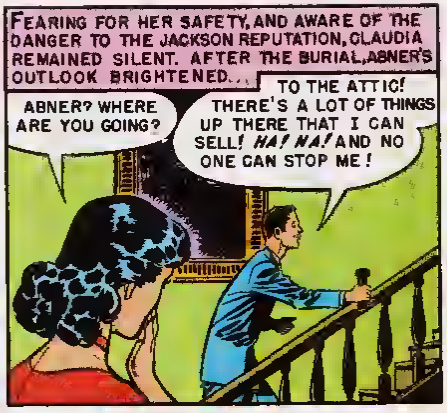
SLAP!

CRACK

?

...LUVVA PETE! THE OLD GUY'S *DEAD!*

YOU YOU'VE *KILLED* HIM!
SHUT UP! IF YOU TELL ONE WORD ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED, *YOU'LL* DIE TOO! BESIDES THE *SCANDAL* WOULD *RUIN* THE FAMILY'S HONOR!

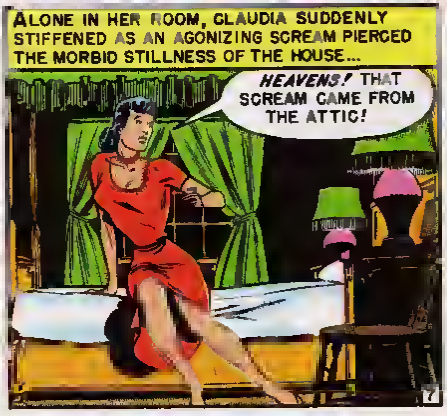

FEARING FOR HER SAFETY, AND AWARE OF THE DANGER TO THE JACKSON REPUTATION, CLAUDIA REMAINED SILENT. AFTER THE BURIAL, ABNER'S OUTLOOK BRIGHTENED...
ABNER? WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
TO THE ATTIC! THERE'S A LOT OF THINGS UP THERE THAT I CAN SELL! *HA! HA!* AND NO ONE CAN STOP ME!

AH! LET'S SEE! OH! THERE'S THE PAINTING OF OLD "SOUR-PUSS JACKSON"! HIM AND HIS FANCY SWORD! FMPFF! BET IT WAS NEVER OUT OF ITS SHEATH!

WONDER WHAT I SHOULD SELL FIRST! THERE'S A *LOT* OF ANTIQUES HERE THAT OUGHT TO BRING A GOOD PRICE...
SAY...

I THINK I'LL SELL THIS WHOLE PLANTATION! *YEAH!* WHO CAN STOP ME? OUGHT TO GET QUITE A WAD FOR THIS DUMP! HMMM ..

SURE! AFTER I COLLECT ON THIS PLACE, I'LL GET A QUICK DIVORCE, AND THEN... *EH?* WHAT'S THAT NOISE?
WHA...?

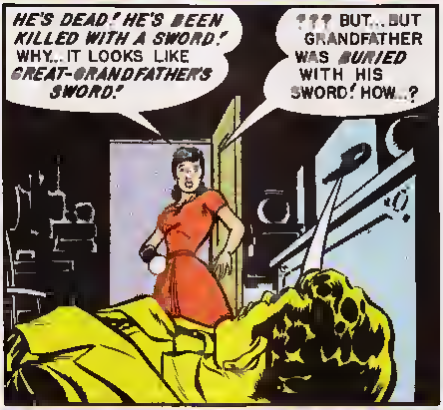

ALONE IN HER ROOM, CLAUDIA SUDDENLY STIFFENED AS AN AGONIZING SCREAM PIERCED THE MORBID STILLNESS OF THE HOUSE...
HEAVENS! THAT SCREAM CAME FROM THE ATTIC!

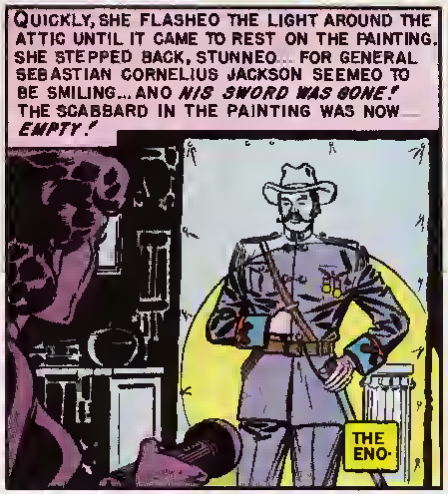
ABNER! ABNER, ARE YOU IN HERE?

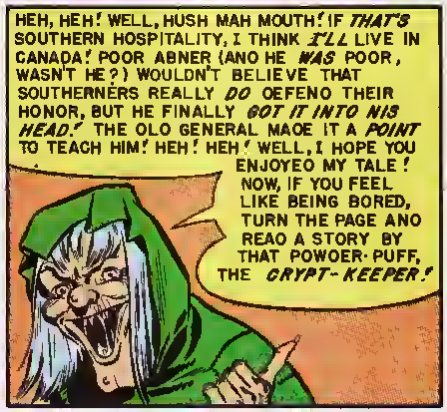
HERE'S HIS FLASHLIGHT ON THE FLOOR! SOMETHING MUST HAVE HAPPENED!

..DON'T SEE ANYTHING YET! I...
OH! WHAT'S THIS?

EEE-EEE-EEK! ABNER!


HE'S DEAD! HE'S BEEN KILLED WITH A SWORD! WHY... IT LOOKS LIKE GREAT-GRANDFATHER'S SWORD!
??? BUT... BUT GRANDFATHER WAS BURIED WITH HIS SWORD! HOW...?


QUICKLY, SHE FLASHED THE LIGHT AROUND THE ATTIC UNTIL IT CAME TO REST ON THE PAINTING. SHE STEPPED BACK, STUNNED... FOR GENERAL SEBASTIAN CORNELIUS JACKSON SEEMED TO BE SMILING... AND HIS SWORD WAS GONE! THE SCABBARD IN THE PAINTING WAS NOW... EMPTY!
THE END

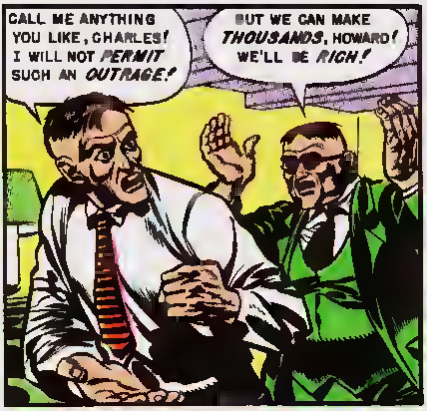

HEH, HEH! WELL, HUSH MAH MOUTH! IF THAT'S SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY, I THINK I'LL LIVE IN CANADA! POOR ABNER (AND HE WAS POOR, WASN'T HE?) WOULDN'T BELIEVE THAT SOUTHERNERS REALLY DO DEFEND THEIR HONOR, BUT HE FINALLY GOT IT INTO HIS HEAD! THE OLD GENERAL MADE IT A POINT TO TEACH HIM! HEH! HEH! WELL, I HOPE YOU ENJOYED MY TALE! NOW, IF YOU FEEL LIKE BEING BORED, TURN THE PAGE AND READ A STORY BY THAT POWDER-PUFF, THE CRYPT-KEEPER!

THE CRYPT OF TERROR

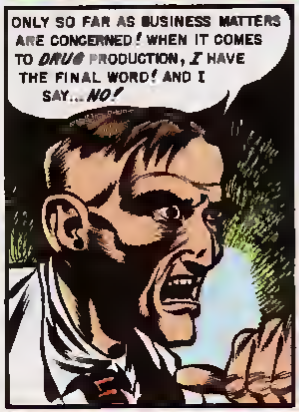
HERE'S A DELIGHTFUL TALE THAT I'M SURE WILL MAKE THE HAIRS ON THE BACK OF YOUR NECK CRAWL! IT'S A CHILLER-DILLER SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO FREEZE THE BLOOD IN YOUR VEINS! FROM MY VAST COLLECTION OF TERROR-TALES THAT I KEEP HERE IN THE *CRYPT*, I.. THE *CRYPT-KEEPER*... CHOOSE THE SPINE-TINGLING TALE I CALL...

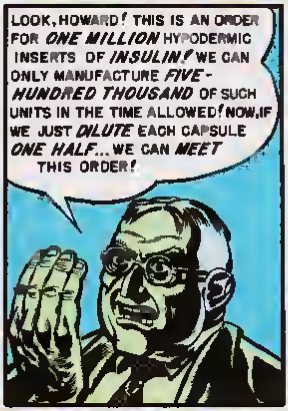
THE JELLYFISH!

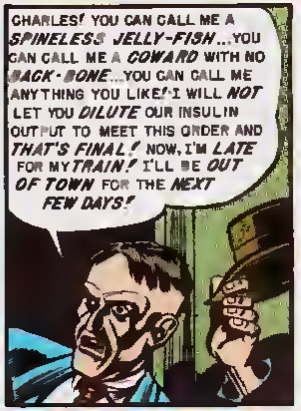
NIGHT COVERS THE SLEEPING CITY! IT SHROUDS THE DANK STREETS AND DESERTED ALLEYS LIKE A VELVET BLANKET! HERE AND THERE A MOTH-HOLE OF TWINKLING LIGHT MARS THE BLACKNESS! ONE OF THESE LIGHTS SHINES FROM A WINDOW OF THE BUILDING MARKED 'NORTON PHARMACEUTICAL SUPPLY CO.' INSIDE, TWO MEN FACE EACH OTHER...

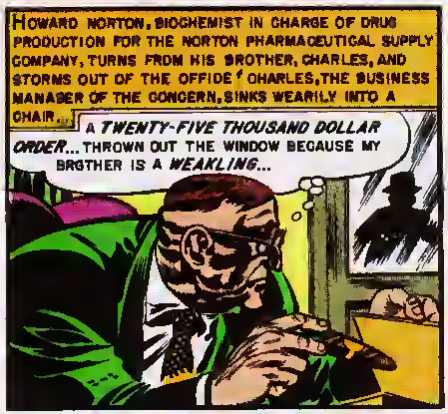

CALL ME ANYTHING YOU LIKE, CHARLES! I WILL NOT PERMIT SUCH AN OUTRAGE!
BUT WE CAN MAKE THOUSANDS, HOWARD! WE'LL BE RICH!

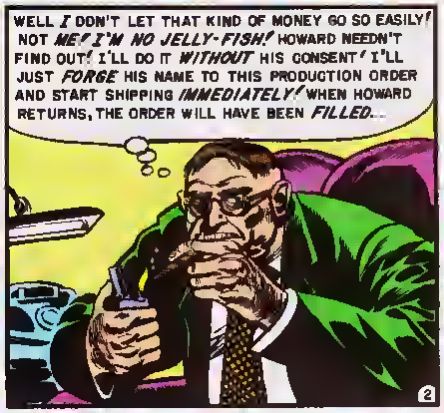
I DON'T CARE, CHARLES! YOU'RE PLAYING WITH HUMAN LIFE! I WILL NOT AGREE TO SUCH A FIENDISH PLOT!
LISTEN, YOU JELLY-FISH! I'M THE BUSINESS MANAGER OF THIS COMPANY! WHAT I SAY GOES!


ONLY SO FAR AS BUSINESS MATTERS ARE CONCERNED! WHEN IT COMES TO DRUG PRODUCTION, I HAVE THE FINAL WORD! AND I SAY... NO!


LOOK, HOWARD! THIS IS AN ORDER FOR ONE MILLION HYPODERMIC INSERTS OF INSULIN! WE CAN ONLY MANUFACTURE FIVE-HUNDRED THOUSAND OF SUCH UNITS IN THE TIME ALLOWED! NOW, IF WE JUST DILUTE EACH CAPSULE ONE HALF... WE CAN MEET THIS ORDER!


CHARLES! YOU CAN CALL ME A SPINELESS JELLY-FISH... YOU CAN CALL ME A COWARD WITH NO BACK-BONE... YOU CAN CALL ME ANYTHING YOU LIKE! I WILL NOT LET YOU DILUTE OUR INSULIN OUTPUT TO MEET THIS ORDER AND THAT'S FINAL! NOW, I'M LATE FOR MY TRAIN! I'LL BE OUT OF TOWN FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS!


HOWARD NORTON, BIOCHEMIST IN CHARGE OF DRUG PRODUCTION FOR THE NORTON PHARMACEUTICAL SUPPLY COMPANY, TURNS FROM HIS BROTHER, CHARLES, AND STORMS OUT OF THE OFFICE! CHARLES, THE BUSINESS MANAGER OF THE CONCERN, SINKS WEARILY INTO A CHAIR...
A TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLAR ORDER... THROWN OUT THE WINDOW BECAUSE MY BROTHER IS A WEAKLING...


WELL I DON'T LET THAT KIND OF MONEY GO SO EASILY! NOT ME! I'M NO JELLY-FISH! HOWARD NEEDN'T FIND OUT! I'LL DO IT WITHOUT HIS CONSENT! I'LL JUST FORGE HIS NAME TO THIS PRODUCTION ORDER AND START SHIPPING IMMEDIATELY! WHEN HOWARD RETURNS, THE ORDER WILL HAVE BEEN FILLED...
2

ANO SO, WITHOUT HOWANO KNOWINS IT, CHANLES NORTON BEBINS THE SHIPMENTS OF OILUTED INSULIN! Y'KNOW WHAT *INSULIN* IS, KIOOIES? PEOPLE SUFFERINS FHOM *DIABETES* HAVE TO TAKE IT OR ELSE THEY PASS OUT. MATBE EVEN DIE!
WHAT IS IT, OOGTON?
HE'S IN A COMA! ANE TOU SUNE HE TOOK HIS *INSULIN* TOOAT, MNS. BNEENE?
POSITIVE, OOGTOR! I GAVE IT TO HIM MYSELF!
STRANSE! LET ME BEE HIS INSULIM SUPPLY!
ALL OVEN THE GOUNTNT, THINGS BEBIN TO HAPPER
H..HE JUST *COLLAPSED*.. NIGHT THENE ON THE SIDEWALK!
SOMEBODY BET A *DOCTOR!*
DON'T *BOTHER!* *TNIS GUY'S DEAD!*
PEOPLE TAKING NORTON INSULIN PON DIABETES BEBIN TO DROP LIKE FLIES..
I.. I'M SORRY, MN. THONMTON! TOUN WIFE IS *DEAD!* SHE MUST HAVE FORGOTTEN TO TAKE HEN INSULIN LATELY!
SUT.. SHE *DID!* SHE TOOK IT EVERY OAT JUST AS YOU PRESCNIBED!
ANO THEN IT IS DISCOVEREO..
NO! IT CAN'T BE! THIS INSULIN HAS BEEN *DILUTED!* IT'S.. IT'S PRACTICALLT WORTHLESS IN THIS CONCENTNATION!
IN A FEW OATS..
I'M FROM THE GOVENRMENT PUNE FOODS AND DNUGS AOMINISTNATION! WHO IS NESPONSIBLE FON THE DRUG PNOOUCTION OF THIS COMPANY?
WHT, MY BNOTHER HOWANO IS BIOCHEMIST IN CHANGE! I'M JUST THE BUSINESS MANABEN!
3

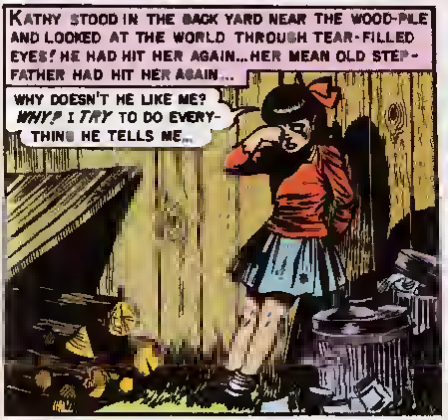
WHERE CAN I FIND HIM?
HE'S PROBABLY IN HIS LABORATORY DOWN THE HALL!
THE GOVERNMENT MAN MOVES DOWN THE HALL TO THE DOOR MARKED 'LABORATORY'! HE OPENS IT AND..
YOU HOWARD NORTON, BIOCHEMIST IN CHARGE OF DRUG PRODUCTION?
YES! THAT'S ME!
NORTON! YOU'RE UNDER ARREST!
WHAT?
CHARLES WATCHES, A FAINT SMILE ON HIS FACE, AS THE STUTTERING, STAMMERING HOWARD IS HANDCUFFED..
HOWARD! YOU'RE ACTING LIKE A BABY! HAVEN'T YOU GOT A BACKBONE? DON'T BE A SPINELESS COWARD! FACE IT...LIKE A MAN!
WHAT... WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WHAT DID I DO?
C'MON, MR. NORTON!
IN HIS CELL, AWAITING TRIAL
HOW COULD MY BROTHER DO THIS TO ME? WHAT CAN I TELL THEM?
THE TRIAL IS SWIFT! THE EVIDENCE AGAINST HOWARD IS UNDENIABLE! HE HAD BEEN IN CHARGE! 'HE' HAD 'SIGNED' THE PRODUCTION ORDER! HE MUST BE GUILTY! HOWARD REMAINS SILENT THROUGHOUT THE PROCEEDINGS...RESIGNED...
..AND SO I SAY TO YOU, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN OF THE JURY...
CHARLES WAS RIGHT! HE CALLED ME SPINELESS.. A JELLY-FISH! WELL, MAYBE I AM! I MUST BE! IF I WEREN'T I'D FIGHT THIS THIS FRAME-UP!
BUT HOWARD DOESN'T FIGHT! AND WHEN THE JURY FINDS HIM GUILTY...
I SENTENCE YOU, HOWARD NORTON, TO NOT LESS THAN TEN NOR MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS IN THE FEDERAL PENITENTIARY AT LEVENWORTH, KANSAS!
TEN YEARS!

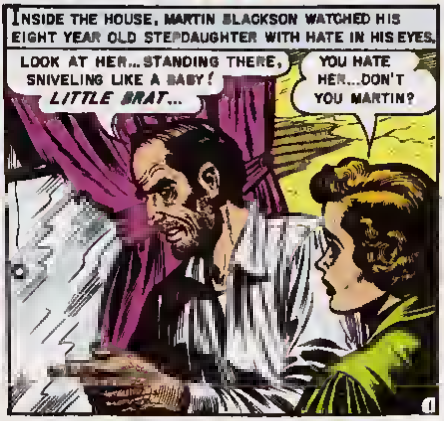
YES, THE JUDGE SENTENCES HOWARD NORTON TO FROM TER TO TWENTY YEARS! THAT'S A LONG TIME! TIME FOR A MAN TO THINK... TO PLAN... TO GROW BITTEN..
SO HE SAID I HAD NO BACKBONE, EH? WELL.. WE'LL SEE! WE'LL SEE!
HEY, NORTON! THE WANDEN WANTS TO SEE YOU!
YOU WANTED TO SEE ME, WARDEN?
YES, NORTON! SIT DOWN!
I'VE BEEN LOOKING OVER YOUR RECORD! YOU'RE A BIO-CHEMIST.. AND A GOOD ONE AT THAT! WE COULD USE A MAN LIKE YOU IN THE PRISON HOSPITAL LAB! WANT THE JOB?
W...WHY... YES, SIR!
THEN THE JOB IS YOURS! NOW REMEMBER, NORTON! YOU'RE ON YOUR HONOR! NO DILUTING OF DRUGS, EH?
NO, SIR! YOU CAN DEPEND ON ME, SIR!
AND SO, HOWARD NORTON GOES TO WORK IN THE PRISON HOSPITAL LABORATORY! IN SPARE MOMENTS HE BEGINS TO EXPERIMENT...
HEY, NORTON! WHY AREN'T YOU DOWN IN THE RECREATION HALL? THEY'VE GOT A GOOD MOVIE, TONIGHT!
I'D RATHER STAY HERE, GUARD! I'M... I'M WORKING ON SOMETHING!
YES! TEN YEARS IS A LONG TIME! PLENTY OF TIME FOR A MAN TO FIND WHAT HE'S LOOKING FOR...
UGH! THIS CHOW IS AWFUL! SAY, NORTON! ARE YOU NUTS? WHAT ARE YOU PUTTING THOSE BONES IN YOUR POCKET FOR?
I... I NEED THEM FOR AN EXPERIMENT I'M WORKING ON!
ONE DAY, AFTER EIGHT LONG YEARS...
AT LAST! I'VE SUCCEEDED! SO I'VE GOT NO BACK-BONE, EH, CHARLES? SO I'M JUST A JELLY-FISH, EH? WE'LL SEE! WE'LL SEE!
6

AND SO, AFTER TEN YEARS OF GOOD BEHAVIOR, HOWARD NORTON IS PAROLED..
FREE... AT LAST!
A FEW NIGHTS LATER, AS CHARLES NORTON IS SITTING IN HIS LUXURIOUS HOME..
YES, COLLINS?
IT'S YOUR BROTHER, SIR! HE'S OUTSIDE! HE WANTS TO SEE YOU!
HOWARD.. OUT OF PRISON? SEND HIM AWAY! I DON'T WANT TO SEE HIM! I..
CHARLES! IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME!
H-HOW ARE YOU, HOWARD?
AS WELL AS CAN BE EXPECTED, CHARLES! HOW'S BUSINESS? YOU LOOK QUITE PROSPEROUS!
Y-YES! THAT INSULIN ORDER WAS JUST WHAT WE NEEDED! AFTER THE SCANDAL, I SWITCHED TO PLASTICS! MADE QUITE A LOT OF MONEY!
I WONDER IF YOU COULD FIND A PLACE FOR ME, CHARLES? I'M ASKING YOU TO FORGIVE ME FOR THE TROUBLE I CAUSED YOU!
STILL THE SPINELESS JELLY-FISH, EH, HOWARD? APOLOGIZING WHEN YOU KNOW I FRAMED YOU! ALL RIGHT! I FORGIVE YOU! YOU CAN START IN THE MORNING!
THANK YOU, CHARLES! THANK YOU!
COME! WE'LL DRINK TO OUR REUNION! NO HARD FEELINGS?
NO HARD FEELINGS, CHARLES!
6

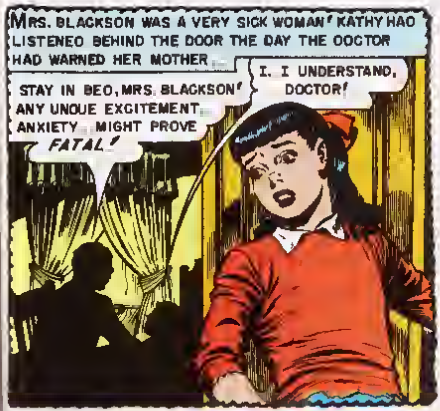
AS CHARLES POURS THE DRINKS, HOWARD TAKES A SMALL WHITE PILL FROM HIS POCKET AND DROPS IT INTO CHARLES' GLASS WHILE HIS HEAD IS TURNED...
YES! THERE'S PLENTY FOR BOTH OF US, HOWARD!
CHARLES SWALLOWS THE DRINK SWIFTLY...
YOU ALWAYS CALLED ME A SPINELESS JELLY-FISH WITH NO BACK-BONE, DIDN'T YOU, CHARLES?
THAT'S WHAT YOU ARE, HOWARD!
WHILE I WAS IN PRISON, I HAD A CHANCE TO DO SOME EXPERIMENTS!
CHARLES SHUDDERS AND STARES AT THE GLASS...
O-O-O-OH! WHAT WAS IN THIS DRINK?
A LITTLE CHEMICAL COMPOUND I DEVELOPED, CHARLES! IT IS RATHER POWERFUL!
THE GLASS FALLS TO THE FLOOR AND SHATTERS! CHARLES GRASPS THE TABLE FOR SUPPORT! HIS BODY GOES LIMP...
IT DISSOLVES CALCIUM AND PHOSPHOROUS SALTS! YOU KNOW... WHAT BONES ARE MADE OF!
UUUGGNNN!
SUDDENLY, THE RIGIDITY LEAVES CHARLES' BODY AND HE COLLAPSES TO THE FLOOR... A MASS OF FLESH...
GLLAGHH!
NOW, I AM NOT THE SPINELESS, BACK-BONELESS ONE, CHARLES! YOU ARE!
HOWARD GAZES AT THE MOUND OF QUIVERING FLESH BEFORE HIM! HIS THOUGHTS GO BACK TO THE DAYS WHEN HE WAS A CHILD, AT THE BEACH... WHEN HE WOULD ACCIDENTALLY CRUSH A SLIMY JELLY-FISH UNDER HIS BARE FOOT! HE SHUDDERS... CLENCHES HIS FISTS AND...
NOW YOU ARE A JELLY-FISH, CHARLES!
HEH, HEH! WELL, THAT'S MY LITTLE OFFERING FOR YOUR CONTEMPLATION, DEAR READER! YES, THERE WERE NO HARD FEELINGS ANYMORE! IN FACT, AFTER HOWARD HAD REMOVED HIS SHOES AND SOCKS, CHARLES FELT QUITE SOFT TO HIM! HOWARD WASTED NO TIME! BESIDES, IT WAS GETTING LATE! HE HAD TO STEP ON IT! 'BYE NOW! SEE YOU IN MY OWN GOOK, TALES FROM THE CRYPT. I'LL RETURN YOU NOW TO MY FELLOW GHOULUNATIC, THE VAULT-KEEPER!
7

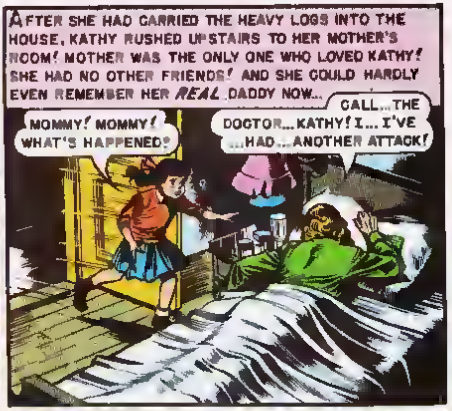
THIS IS THE STORY OF THE NIGHT THAT KATHY'S DADDY LOST HIS HEAD!!





MARTIN SPUN AROUND AT THE SOUND OF ETHEL'S VOICE..
WHAT ARE YOU DDING OUT OF BED?
I HEARD YOU BEATING KATHY! I CDULDN'T STAND IT!
GET BACK UPSTAIRS! YOU KNOW WHAT THE DOCTOR SAID...
YOU DIDN'T ANSWER NY QUESTION, MARTIN! WHY DO YOU NATE KATHY?
WELL, IF YOU MUST KNDW IT'S BECAUSE SHE LOOKS SO NUCH LIKE JOHN, YOUR FIRST HUSBAND!
AND YOU'RE JEALOUS OF JDHN, AREN'T YOU? EVEN THOUGH HE'S DEAD, YOU'RE JEALOUS OF NIM!
WHY SHOULDN'T I BE? YOU DON'T FOOL ME, ETHEL! I KNOW YDU STILL LOVE HIM! I KNOW YOU NEVER LOVED ME... THAT YOU ONLY MARRIED ME FOR SECURITY!
BUT WHY... WHY TAKE IT OUT ON KATHY?
OUTSIDE, KATHY DRIED HER EYES WITH A TINY CLENCHED FIST! THE SQUEAK OF MRS. THAUMATURGE'S ROCKER DRIFTED ACROSS THE STILL AFTERNOON AIR! OLD, CROTCHETY MRS. THAUMATURGE! KATHY WAS AFRAID OF MRS. THAUMATURGE... HER WRINKLED SKIN.. HER STRINGY HAIR... HER TOOTHLESS GRIN! THROUGH A CRACK IN THE BOARD FENCE, KATHY PEEKED AT THE OLD WDMAN...
DON'T PEER AT ME THROUGH FENCES, CHILD! IF YDU WANT TO GET A GDDD LOOK... COME ON OVER!
HER STEPFATHER HAD WARNED HER ABOUT MRS. THAUMATURGE! HE'D CALLED HER A WITCH! ONCE, HE HAD TOLD HER...
I'LL CALL DVER MRS. THAUMATURGE! SHE'S A WITCH! SHE'LL TAKE YOU AWAY! SHE'LL BAKE YOU.. IN HER OVEN.
NO, DADDY! NO! PLEASE!
KATHY SHIVERED BEHIND THE BOARD FENCE! 'SHE MUST BE A WITCH! HOW DID SHE KNOW I WAS WATCHING HER?' SHE WONDERED! SUDDENLY SHE SENSED HER STEPFATHER BEHIND HER...HIS HEAVY BREATHING.. HIS FAMILIAR ODOR...
I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU TO GET THE WOOD. NOW... GET IT!
YES, DADDY! YES...
2

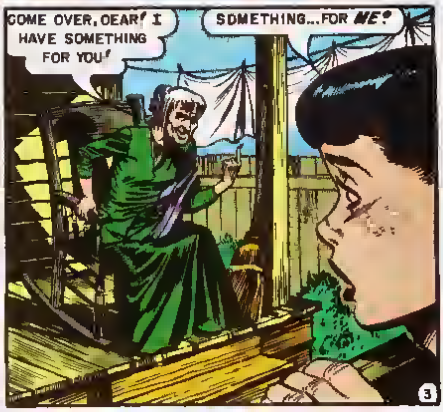

MRS. BLACKSON WAS A VERY SICK WOMAN! KATHY HAD LISTENED BEHIND THE DOOR THE DAY THE DOCTOR HAD WARNED HER MOTHER...
STAY IN BED, MRS. BLACKSON! ANY UNDUE EXCITEMENT... ANXIETY... MIGHT PROVE FATAL!
I, I UNDERSTAND, DOCTOR!


AFTER SHE HAD CARRIED THE HEAVY LOGS INTO THE HOUSE, KATHY RUSHED UPSTAIRS TO HER MOTHER'S ROOM! MOTHER WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO LOVED KATHY! SHE HAD NO OTHER FRIENDS! AND SHE COULD HARDLY EVEN REMEMBER HER REAL DADDY NOW...
MOMMY! MOMMY! WHAT'S HAPPENED?
CALL... THE DOCTOR... KATHY! I... I'VE ...HAD... ANOTHER ATTACK!

KATHY'S EYES FILLED WITH TEARS! THEY RAN DOWN HER CHEEKS... WASHING CROOKED WHITE TRAILS IN THE BLACK SMUDGES! KATHY FLUNG HERSELF ON HER KNEES AND LAY HER HEAD ON HER MOTHER'S HEAVING CHEST..
OH, MOMMY! MOMMY! PLEASE, DON'T DIE... DON'T DIE AND LEAVE ME... PLEASE...
KATHY... GASP... PLEASE.. HURRY... CALL THE... GASP... DOCTOR... HURRY...

WHEN KATHY CAME BACK TO THE HOUSE WITH THE DOCTOR, HER MOTHER WAS DEAD...
I'M SORRY, MARTIN! THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO!
OF COURSE, DOCTOR!
MOMMY... GONE... SOB... SOB...

AFTER THE FUNERAL, KATHY'S STEPFATHER SEEMED TO TREAT HER EVEN MORE CRUELLY THAN BEFORE! SHE WAS ALL ALONE! HER STEPFATHER WOULD GO OFF TO WORK AND LEAVE HER TO SHIFT FOR HERSELF! OF COURSE, THERE WERE THINGS TO DO... THE FLOORS.. THE WASHING... DUSTING... MOPPING... CARRYING WOOD...
KATHY? THAT YOU BY THE WOODPILE?
Y-YES, MRS. THAUMATURGE...


COME OVER, DEAR! I HAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU!
SOMETHING... FOR ME?

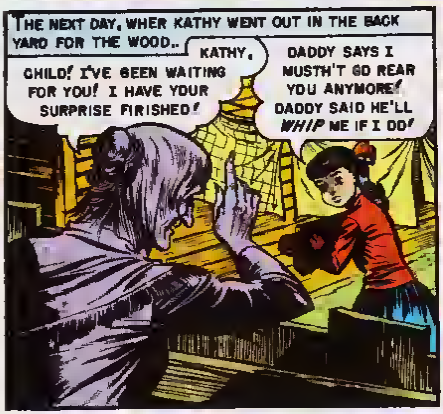
AT FIRST KATHY WAS AFRAID TO GO! BUT LONELINESS IS EVEN MORE FRIGHTENING FOR AR EIGHT YEAR OLD! SO...
CANDY! FOR ME!
EAT IT, CHILD! IT'S GOOD! MADE IT MYSELF! SIT DOWN... WE'LL TALK!

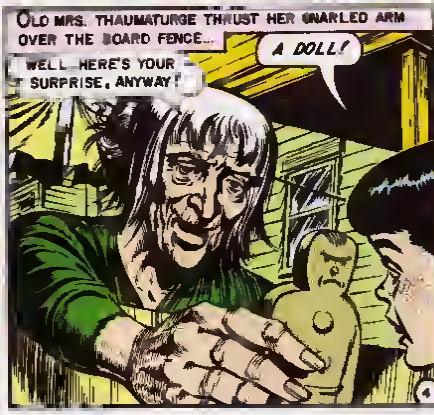
KATHY AND MRS. THAUMATURGE BECAME VERY FRIENDLY IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS! KATHY POURED OUT HER HEART TO THE OLD WOMAN, AND FELT RELIEVED! SHE WOULD VISIT MRS. THAUMATURGE EVERY DAY...
WHAT ARE YOU MAKING, MRS. THAUMATURGE?
SOMETHING, CHILD! SOMETHING SPECIAL! A SURPRISE... FOR YOU!

KATHY WAS HAPPY AGAIN! AT LEAST SHE RECEIVED SOME AFFECTION! NOT LIKE IN THE EVERINGS, WHEN HER STEPFATHER CAME HOME FROM WORK...
YOU DIDN'T WASH THE WINDOWS, DID YOU? YOU DIDN'T DO WHAT I TOLD YOU...
I, I FORGOT, DADDY! I WAS WATCHING MRS. THAUMATURGE... COOKING...

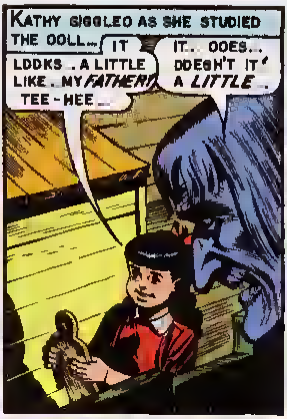
I TOLD YOU TO STAY AWAY FROM THAT OLD CRONE, DIDN'T I! SHE'S BAD! SHE'S A WITCH!
SHE'S NOT! SHE'S NOT! SHE'S MY FRIEND!

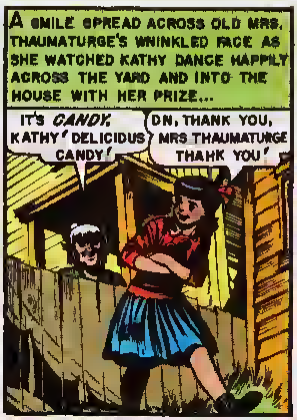
WELL, YOU STAY AWAY FROM HER OR I'LL THRASH YOU WITHIR AN INCH OF YOUR LIFE...
YES DADDY...

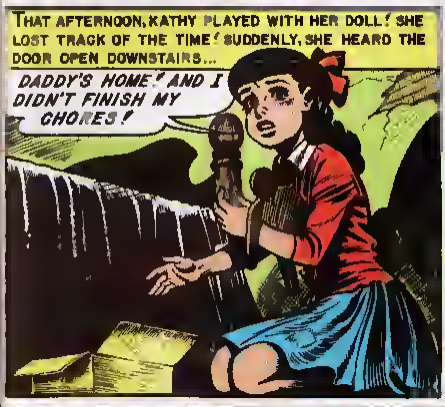

THE NEXT DAY, WHER KATHY WENT OUT IN THE BACK YARD FOR THE WOOD...
KATHY, CHILD! I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU! I HAVE YOUR SURPRISE FIRISHED!
DADDY SAYS I MUSTH'T GO REAR YOU ANYMORE! DADDY SAID HE'LL WHIP ME IF I DO!

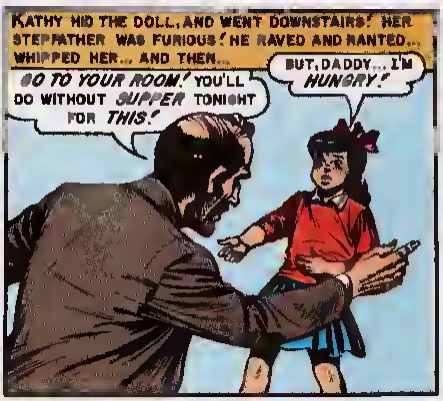

OLD MRS. THAUMATURGE THRUST HER GNARLED ARM OVER THE BOARD FENCE...
WELL... HERE'S YOUR SURPRISE, ANYWAY!
A DOLL!

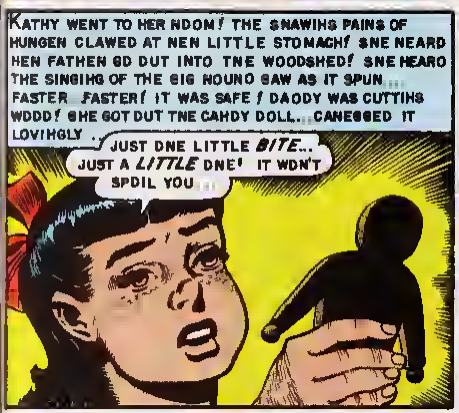
KATHY HAD NEVER HAD A DOLL! SHE HELD IT LOVINGLY IN HER TINY HANDS...
IT'S CANDY, KATHY! I MADE IT MYSELF! YOU CAN EAT IT WHEN YOU FEEL LIKE IT!
OH, NO! I'D NEVER EAT IT! NEVER! I'LL LOVE IT, ALWAYS!

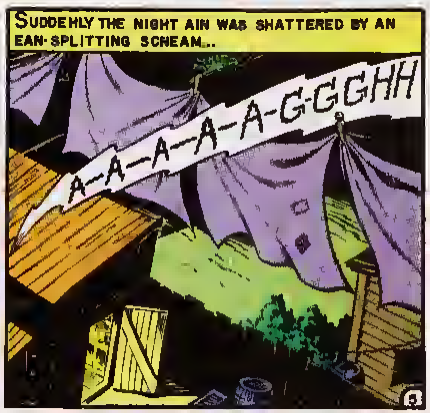

KATHY GIGGLED AS SHE STUDIED THE DOLL...
IT LOOKS .. A LITTLE LIKE.. MY FATHER! TEE-HEE...
IT.. OOES... DOESN'T IT' A LITTLE..


A SMILE SPREAD ACROSS OLD MRS. THAUMATURGE'S WRINKLED FACE AS SHE WATCHED KATHY DANCE HAPPILY ACROSS THE YARD AND INTO THE HOUSE WITH HER PRIZE...
IT'S CANDY, KATHY! DELICIDUS CANDY!
OH, THANK YOU, MRS. THAUMATURGE THANK YOU!


THAT AFTERNOON, KATHY PLAYED WITH HER DOLL! SHE LOST TRACK OF THE TIME! SUDDENLY, SHE HEARD THE DOOR OPEN DOWNSTAIRS...
DADDY'S HOME! AND I DIDN'T FINISH MY CHORES!


KATHY HID THE DOLL, AND WENT DOWNSTAIRS! HER STEPFATHER WAS FURIOUS! HE RAVED AND RANTED... WHIPPED HER... AND THEN...
GO TO YOUR ROOM! YOU'LL DO WITHOUT SUPPER TONIGHT FOR THIS!
BUT, DADDY... I'M HUNGRY!


KATHY WENT TO HER ROOM! THE GNAWING PAINS OF HUNGER CLAWED AT HER LITTLE STOMACH! SHE HEARD HER FATHER GO OUT INTO THE WOODSHED! SHE HEARD THE SINGING OF THE BIG ROUND SAW AS IT SPUN... FASTER... FASTER! IT WAS SAFE! DADDY WAS CUTTING WOOD! SHE GOT OUT THE CANDY DOLL... CARESSED IT LOVINGLY...
JUST ONE LITTLE BITE... JUST A LITTLE ONE! IT WON'T SPOIL YOU...


SUDDENLY THE NIGHT AIR WAS SHATTERED BY AN EAR-SPLITTING SCREAM...
A-A-A-A-A-G-G-GHH

AFTER THE DOCTDN HAD COME AND GONE, KATHY STOLE SILENTLY TO HER STEPFATHEN'S ROOM! HE LAY IN HIS BED, MOANING...
I... I'M SDNNY YDU CUT OFF YOUR HAND, DADDY! I... I HOPE IT DIDN'T HURT!
GO AWAY! GO AWAY AHD LEAVE ME ALONE!
SUDDENLY MARTIN SLADKSON'S EYES FELL UPON THE CANDY DOLL THAT KATHY HELD TENDERLY IN HER ANMS.
WHERE DID YOU GET THAT DOLL?
MRS. THAUMATUNBE MADE IT FDN ME!
THE HAND... THE LEFT NAND OF THE DDLL... THE SAME HAND AS THE ONE HE HAD ACCIDENTLY AMPUTATED... WAS MISSING...
GIVE IT TO ME! GIVE IT TD ME, QUICKLY! IT'S EVIL...
HO, DADDY! ND! IT'S CANDY...
MANTIN STUMBLED TOWAND KATHY, GASPING FOR BREATH! SHE BACKED AWAY, HUGGING THE DOLL TO HEN CHEST...
GASP... YOU'NE CRUSHING ME! I... CAN'T BNEATHE! GASP... GIVE IT TO ME!
HD! IT'S MINE! IT'S NDT EVIL! IT'S DNLY CANDY SEE?
KATHY NAISED THE DDLL TD HEN MDUTH, AND SWIFTLY BIT ITS HEAD DFF! IT WAS TASTY CANAMEL! SHE STANED AT HER FATHEN WIDE-EYED WHILE SHE CHEWED.
SEE... IT'S ONLY CANDY! DADDY... DADDY...
KATHY TUNNED AND WALKED DUT DF HEN STEPFATHER'S NDDM! SHE WEHT DDWNSTAIRS, ACNDSS THE BACK YAND, AND UP MNS THAUMATUNGE'S PDNCH STEPS! AS SHE DPENED THE DDDR, SHE GULPED DOWN THE LAST DF THE CANAMEL HEAD.
MNS. TNAUMATUNGE! CDME SEE! THE STRANGEST THING JUST HAPPENED TD DADDY!
MRS. THAUMATUNGE SMILED AS SNE GAZED AT THE NEADLESS CANDY DOLL IH KATHY'S HAHD...
THE END
HEH, HEH! WHAT A DELICIDUS FINISH FDN A STORY, EH, DEAR NEADEN? IT CENTAINLY WAS A MOUTHFUL TO SWALLDW... FDN CATHY, THAT IS! DH, BY THE WAY! IF YDU'NE WDHDENIHG WHAT HAPPENED TO CATHY AFTEN HEN LDVIN' STEPFATHEN DIED, REST EASY! DLD MNS THAUMATUNGE ADOPTED HEN! NIGHT NDW, SHE'S GIVING KATHY FLYING LESSONS... DN A BROOM! AND HDW, I'LL TURN YDU DVEN TD THAT DTHEN SNDDM-PILDT... THE OLD WITCH!

THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! SO THAT *NURSERY TALE* THE *VAULT-KEEPER* JUST TOLD YOU WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A *HORROR STORY*, EH? *HMMMPH!* I'M SURE YOU WERE ALL *BORED TO DEATH!* NOW IF YOU *REALLY* WANT A *GOOD* HORROR TALE... NOT A *CHILDREN'S FAIRY TALE*... COME IN! COME INTO THE *HAUNT OF FEAR!* I AM *THE OLD WITCH!* MY CAULDRON IS FILLED TO THE BRIM WITH AN EVIL BREW! ITS CONTENTS ARE SUB-BLING AND STEAMING! SO SIT DOWN ON THAT *BED OF NAILS* OVER THERE AND I'LL DISH OUT A *POINTED* TALE.. A TALE I CALL...

REUNION!

G. Ingels

MY STORY BEGINS JUST OUTSIDE A SMALL MID-WESTERN TOWN! IT IS NIGHT! THE MOON HANGS LOW IN THE SPRING SKY! ITS REFLECTION SHIMMERS ON THE WATERS OF A PLACID LAKE! UNDER A GNARLED OAK TREE, A WOMAN STANDS SOBBING QUIETLY, GAZING OUT OVER THE STILL WATER...

OH, WHY...SOB... WHY DID IT HAVE TO HAPPEN?

THAT'S LILLIAN ANSLEY DRYING HER LITTLE HEART OUT! POOR WOMAN! WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED? IT'S A LONG SAD STORY! BRACE YOURSELF .
LILLIAN WAS YOUNG WHEN SHE MARRIED WALDO ANSLEY! PROBABLY TOO YOUNG! NINETEEN! WALDO WAS THIRTY-THREE AT THE TIME! LILLIAN WAS INFATUATED WITH THIS DISTINGUISHED-LOOKING OLDER MAN... AND WALDO'S ESO DIDN'T SUFFER AT HAVING A NINETEEN YEAR OLD GIRL IN LOVE WITH HIM, SO ...
DO YOU MEAN IT, WALDO?
OF COURSE, LILLIAN! I'M ASKING YOU TO MARRY ME!
THAT WAS SIXTEEN YEARS AGO! LILLIAN AND WALDO WERE VERY HAPPY AFTER THE WEDDING! THE FIRST SIX MONTHS... THAT IS! THEN...
BUT, WALDO!
I KNOW LILLIAN, BUT... I'M TIRED! I COULDN'T GO TO THAT DANCE IF I WANTED TO!
IT WAS THE THIRD TIME IN A MONTH THAT WALDO HAD DONE THIS! LILLIAN WAS DISGUSTED! WALDO'S AGE WAS SHOWING ..
TIRED! YOU'RE ALWAYS TIRED! WELL, I'M YOUNG! I WANT TO HAVE FUN... ENJOY MYSELF WHILE I CAN!
YOU'RE RIGHT, LILLIAN! WHY DON'T YOU GO TO THE DANCE WITHOUT ME?
LILLIAN WENT! SHE WENT TO THE DANCE ALONE! BUT SHE WASN'T ALONE LONG! SOON SHE WAS DANCING WITH YOUNG, ENERGETIC ROGER KANE...
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN ALL MY LIFE, BEAUTIFUL?
LOOKING FOR YOU, HANDSOME!
OH, AT FIRST IT WAS ALL IN FUN! BUT SOON, TALK GOT MORE SERIOUS ... TOO SERIOUS...
I'VE GOT TO SEE YOU AGAIN, LILLIAN! I'VE GOT TO! I... I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU!
ROGER! YOU MUSTN'T! YOU MUSTN'T TALK LIKE THAT! I CAN'T SEE YOU AGAIN! IT'S... IMPOSSIBLE!
BUT SOMEHOW, THE IMPOSSIBLE WAS ACCOMPLISHED! AS WALDO COMPLAINED MORE, LILLIAN SAW ROGER MORE AND MORE...
LILLIAN, DEAREST! YOU'VE GOT TO ASK WALDO FOR A DIVORCE! I WANT TO MARRY YOU!
OH, DARLING! YES! YES! I REALIZE, NOW, I NEVER LOVED HIM! IT'S YOU I LOVE... YOU!

THEY WERE MAD ABOUT EACH OTHER... THOSE TWO! AND SO, LILLIAN MADE UP HER MIND TO TELL WALDO THE WHOLE STORY! BUT BEFORE SHE COULD GET UP ENOUGH COURAGE, WALDO BECAME SERIOUSLY ILL...
IT'S A CRIPPLING FORM OF POLIO, LILLIAN! WHEN IT ATTACKS A MAN WALDO'S AGE, IT MEANS ONLY ONE THING... PARALYSIS!
OH, NO! NO!
POOR LILLIAN! WITH WALDO HELPLESS, AND ROGER BECKONING, SHE WAS IN AN AWFUL QUANDRY! WHAT TO DO? WHAT TO DO? AND THEN, LILLIAN REALIZED THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING TO DO...
HE'S MY HUSBAND, ROGER! HE NEEDS ME! I... I CAN'T LEAVE HIM. .NOT NOW!
I... I WON'T MAKE YOU, LILLIAN! SUT. WELL, YOU KNOW HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU! IT WOULD BE BETTER, THEN, IF I WENT AWAY!
AWAY? FOR GOOD?
YES! IT WOULD BE BETTER IF WE NEVER SAW EACH OTHER AGAIN!
LILLIAN... TEARS STREAMING FROM HER EYES... CLUTCHED ROGER...
NO, ROGER! NOT 'NEVER'! PLEASE... GIVE ME SOMETHING TO LIVE FOR!
I'LL COME BACK! IN FIVE YEARS. MAYBE THEN WE'LL SEE...
HERE, ROGER? WE'LL MEET HERE... BY THE LAKE? FIVE YEARS FROM TONIGHT?
YES! PERHAPS THINGS WILL BE DIFFERENT... PERHAPS THINGS WILL HAVE CHANGED!
AND SO, ROGER AND LILLIAN PARTED! THEY CLUNG TO EACH OTHER, THERE BY THE LAKE, AND VOWED THEIR LOVE... AND PROMISED TO MEET EACH OTHER IN FIVE YEARS IN THAT VERY SPOT...
GOOD-BYE, DARLING! I... LOVE YOU!
GOOD-BYE, LILLIAN! I'LL BE BACK... IN FIVE YEARS! I LOVE YOU, TOO, DEAREST!
AND LILLIAN WENT BACK TO HER INVALID HUSBAND, WALDO! SHE CARED FOR HIM... DAY AND NIGHT... WEEK IN AND WEEK OUT... FOR FIVE LONG YEARS! POOR LILLIAN...
TOMORROW RIGHT! TOMORROW RIGHT ROGER COMES BACK! TOMORROW RIGHT... BY THE LAKE..
LILLIAN... PLEASE... TURN ME OVER...
3

THE NEXT NIGHT THEY WERE THERE, UNDEN THE GNANLED OAK THEE BY THE LAKE, IN EACH OTHEN'S ANMS ..
OH, ROGER... ROGEN..
FIVE YEANS, FIVE LONG YEARS ..
HOW... HOW'S WALDO, LILLIAN?
ALL NIGHT! NO BETTER! NO WORSE!
THEN, YOU STILL WON'T...
NO, ROGER! I CAN'T! HE NEEDS ME! BUT, PLEASE... DON'T TALK!
MAKE UP FOR THOSE FIVE LONG YEARS! KISS ME...
LILLIAN... DARLING!
SUCH A SWEET SCENE! SUCH DEEP LOVE! BUT SOON .. SOON IT WAS ALMOST OVEN
I'VE GOT TO GO, LILLIAN! MY TRAIN...
COME BACK AGAIN, ROGEN? IN FIVE YEARS
IN FIVE YEARS... I'LL BE BACK! I PROMISE!
PLEASE... JUST ONE MORE KISS! IT HAS TO LAST SO LONG...
AND THEN HE WAS GONE... AND LILLIAN WAS ALONE ONCE MONE.. ALONE WITH WALDO... WITH NOTHING TO LOOK FONWAND TO.. NOTHING FOR FIVE LONG YEANS..
LOOK AT ME! NURSING AN INVALID HUSBAND.. AT TWENTY-FIVE..
LILLIAN... PLEASE... A DRINK OF WATER...

THE YEARS DRAGGED ON' ORE ..TWO ..THREE ...FOUR ...FIVE YEARS WENT BY' ARO THER. ORCE MORE, LILLIAR ANO ROGER WERE TOGETHER...
DARLING..
LILLIAR..
...AND WALDO?
LIKE ALWAYS! BUT LET'S ROT TALK, DARLING!
A FEW ECSTATIC HOURS OF HAPPI- RESS, ARO THER...
I'VE ...GOT TO BE GOING, LILLIAR!
SO SOOR... SO SOOR
ROGER BEGGED HER...
LILLIAR! YOU'RE THIRTY! YOU'RE GETTING OR.. WE'RE BOTH GETTING ON IR YEARS! I...
RO, ROGER! I WON'T LEAVE HIM! HE'S HELP- LESS...AND I'M HIS WIFE! COME BACK DARLING.. COME BACK!
ALL RIGHT, LILLIAR! I'LL COME BACK AGAIR.. IN FIVE YEARS ..
PROMISE ME, ROGER! PROMISE ME YOU'LL COME! YOU'RE ALL I.. LIVE FOR!
IT WAS OVER! ROGER WENT AWAY AGAIN! AND ONCE MORE THE YEARS BEGAN TO CRAWL BY! ONE...TWO... BUT THEN...
IS HE VERY BAD, DOCTOR?
HIS HEART MUSCLES ARE GOING! HE'S...DYING, LILLIAR! I... I'M SORRY!
YES, WALDO DIED! AND LILLIAR WAS FREE...
...ASHES TO ASHES! DUST TO DUST...

LILLIAN WAITED A REASONABLE AMOUNT OF TIME AFTER WALDO'S DEATH...
BUT TWO YEARS! I CAN'T WAIT FOR ROGER FOR TWO YEARS! I MUST FIND HIM.
WHERE TO LOOK? ROGER HAD NEVER TOLD WHERE HE LIVED! LILLIAN HAD NO IDEA WHERE TO GO! THEN SHE WENT TO AN OLD FRIEND OF ROGER'S...
ROGER KANE? WHY, DON'T YOU KNOW?
KNOW WHAT?
ROGER KANE IS DEAD! HE WAS KILLED IN THE TRAIN WRECK DOWN AT EVANSVILLE TWO YEARS AGO... MANGLED!
THERE WAS NOTHING LEFT FOR LILLIAN! NOTHING! SHE WAS FREE... BUT ROGER WAS GONE! AND THAT'S WHY SHE'S THERE NOW... UNDER THE GNARLED OAK TREE, CRYING HER LITTLE HEART OUT. TONIGHT... WOULD HAVE BEEN THE NIGHT OF THEIR THIRD REUNION! POOR LILLIAN!
SUDDENLY, A TWIG SNAPS IN THE BUSHES BEHIND LILLIAN! A HOARSE, ALMOST UNINTELLIGIBLE VOICE CALLS HER NAME...
LILLIAN? IS THAT... YOU?
WHO... WHO'S THERE?
ROGER STANDS BEFORE HER! HIS DECAYED AND ROTTED BODY CARRIES THE PUTRID ODOR OF DEATH...
I... I CAME BACK, LILLIAN! I PROMISED...
KEEP AWAY! KEEP AWAY!
SHE SCREAMS! HER TERRIFIED SHRIEK ECHOES ACROSS THE LAKE! ROGER CANNOT UNDERSTAND! HE MOVES TOWARD HER...
IT'S ME, LILLIAN! DON'T CRY OUT! DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE ME?
YAAAAAAAH!

LILLIAR'S PURY FISTS BENO AGAINST ROGER'S TATTEREO CHEST AS HE ORAWS HER TO HIM...
OON'T YOU... LOVE ME ARYMORE, LILLIAR?
EEEEEE
CONFUSED..BEWILDEREO..THE CORPSE OF ROGER KANE TRIES TO COMFORT THE HYSTERICAL SCREAMING WOMAN...
I KNEW I HAO TO COME...SO I CAME! I WALKEO ALL THE WAY... TWELVE MILES-
AAAAGH
SUDDENLY, THE SCREAMING STOPS! LILLIAN SOBS QUIETLY, STARING AT THE DECOMPOSED FACE SO CLOSE TO HERS...
THERE! THAT'S BETTER! ISN'T IT?
ROGER?
POOR LILLIAN! SHE RECOGNIZES ROGER, NOW! SHE SEES HIM CLEARLY... NOT THE UGLY, ROTTING HULK BEFORE HER... BUT AS HE WAS.. LONG AGO...
ROGER DARLING! IT IS YOU!
YES, LILLIAN! IT IS ME!
THE SHOCK HAS BEEN TOO MUCH FOR LILLIAR! SHE HAS GONE COMPLETELY OUT OF HER MIRO! SHE IS STARK RAVIRG MAD...
OH, ROGER OEAREST! WE'RE TOGETHER, ROW FOR ALWAYS! KISS ME...
THE NIGHT ORAGS ON, ANO OAY OAWRS OVER THE LAKE! UROER THE OLO GNARLEO OAK ARE TWO BODIES... ONE, A SMILING LAOY, RECENTLY DEGEASED... THE OTHER, A PUTRID, OEGAYEO, GRINNING GENTLEMAN, LONG DEAD...
HEE, HEE! I HOPE YOU ENJOYED THIS EMBRACING YARR! OEAR ROGER CERTAINLY KEPT HIS PROMISE, DIDN'T HE? HE CAME BACK IR FIVE YEARS AS HE SAIO HE WOULO, EVEN IF HE HAO TO OIG HIMSELF UP OUT OF A GRAVE TO OO IT! ARO LILLIAR? WELL, LILLIAN WAS CRAZY TO SEE HIM, WASN'T SHE? 'BYE NOW! SEE YOU IN MY OWR BOOK... 'THE HAUNT OF FEAR!'
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE STORIES IN THIS BOOK? SEND YOUR COMMENTS TO:
THE VAULT OF HORROR
POB 469
WEST PLAINS MO 65775